



Memo

To: Park Board
From: Park and Recreation Staff
Date: June 10, 2013
Subject: Monthly Update

Following are department highlights for May and early June for your review.

1. Director's report from Ben Wagner:
 - a. *Hamilton Center* - Hamilton Center continues to be a busy place with multiple projects in the works. The new boards have been installed (privately funded) and they look great! The ice is back in and figure skaters have given us numerous compliments. The next projects will be bathroom improvements and a new roof which were approved by City Council. The private fundraising effort is moving along well, led by Jim Henderson and the Park Foundation. The focus of this effort will be around restoration of the original Harry Weese section, new flooring, locker room improvements and energy efficient lighting.
 - b. *Noblitt People Trail re-route* - We received bids for the trail re-route and will be recommending a contractor for the project at this meeting.
 - c. *Free Playground Program* - June 5 was opening day for our Free Playground Program. We are excited to announce that with the help of a grant and support from CRH Foundation and Healthy Communities we will be hosting an additional playground program this year at Morningside Park.
 - d. *CSR* - Customer Service Response system launches Monday, June 10 as "U-Report". This City-wide customer service tracking system allows the public to communicate concerns to all City Departments and tracks the progress of "open tickets". It is available on-line on the City website and can be accessed with iPhone and Google apps with mobile devices.
 - e. *Strategic Plan* - The Mayor is making revisions to the internal strategic plan for City departments with a focus on goals with measures and methods. She would like these to be refined this year so that performance reviews can be tied to the plan for 2014.
 - f. *2014 Budget* - There will be a new budget process for 2014. The budget hearings will be in July. More details to come from Mayor's office and Jeff Logston.
2. Kathy McPeck reported the following for Recreation/Events and Administration:
Fun and Fit at Columbus Gymnastic Center:
 - a. All available party times (13) in May were rented! Available times were less for May than previous months as we were closed May 3-5 for After Prom and closed for Memorial Day weekend, May 25-26.
 - b. Columbus Power Elite All-Stars held their try-outs for their new season on May 18. Their new team will begin practicing on June 10.
 - c. Open gym numbers for May are lower than other months due to warmer weather and we closed for a week for facility maintenance. Open gym numbers for May:
 - Pre-school: 319 (includes MOPS & Moms Club open gyms)
 - Weekly family open gym (Th & Sat): 84
 - Ages 7-up: 39

- d. Summer Session 1 of classes began on Tuesday, May 28. We currently have 20 more children enrolled as compared to the same session last year!
- e. Registration for our gymnastics camp for ages 5-7 for the week of June 10-13 is going well. As of 6/6/13, 18 children are enrolled! We only have 2 spots left!
- f. Cheer Camp for ages 6-8 will be held June 17-21 from 2-3pm. We only have 6 spots open as of 6/6/13.
- g. Country Kids Daycare will be visiting for a field trip on June 24 from 10:15-11:15am
- h. Children from the Boys & Girls Club visited as a special treat for the last day of school on May 31. Approximately 40 children ages 5-12 visited.
- i. Also visiting in June will be Club Teens on June 10, 17 and 24.
- j. Children from the "Come Out & Play" supervised playground program will have a field trip on June 27 from 2-4pm.
- k. As of 6/6/13 we have scheduled 13 birthday parties for June. Only 2 times remain open. Parties are only scheduled on Saturdays during June, July and early August as our requests do go down during the summer months.
- l. Thanks to FFY maintenance staff for the extra cleaning and getting the Gymnastics Center ready for summer while we were closed May 20-25.

Recreation - Events:

- a. The annual "Youth Fishing Derby" for ages 3-15 was held on Sunday, June 2 at Mill Race Park - Round Lake. 37 children participated. 1st through 3rd place prizes were awarded to winners in the following categories: Longest Fish, Shortest Fish and Most Fish Caught. Age groups for prizes were 3-5 yrs., 6-8 yrs., 9-11 yrs. and 12-15 yrs.
- b. The 15th annual Battle of the Bands, sponsored by Teen Council was held on Saturday, June 8th at Mill Race Park. There were many prizes awarded during the Saturday evening event which was free and open to the public. Six local high school/college age bands competed for a chance to open at the Aug. 17 Rock the Park concert. Those Valiants were the winning band and will open for REO Speedwagon. Mayan Miscalculation won the People's Choice Award and earned an appearance at Johnson-Witkemper's Biggest Block Party Ever on July 27 on Fourth Street.
- c. The annual Donner Variety Show series returns for 2013 on June 8th! The event will be held at Donner Park shelter from 7-9pm and it's FREE! The show will feature the East Jazz Band. Variety Shows are co-sponsored by Parks & Recreation, Kiwanis Club of Columbus and News radio 1010 WCSI.
- d. The annual Abby Brinkman 5K will be held at Mill Race on June 22. It was rained out on June 1.
- e. The annual "Juneteenth" celebration, sponsored by the local chapter of the NAACP, will move back to 9th St. Park this year! It's been held at Mill Race for the past 5-6 years but they opted to return to 9th St. this summer. It's a great event for the neighborhood and community!
- f. Two weddings will be held at Mill Race in June (June 8 and 22).
- g. "Picnic in the Park" family show will be held on June 15th at 4pm at Donner Park shelter. The show is free and will feature Michael Perry "the world's smallest giant" with stories and songs!
- h. The annual Thursday Noon Kids Concerts will return to Donner Park shelter in June. June 20 will feature Derek Dye with juggling and other physical comedy skills and June 27 will feature the "Science of Magic" show with Daniel Lusk. Both shows begin at 12N and are FREE!
- i. There will be a class reunion at Mill Race on June 29th.
- j. Also on June 29 the Columbus Young Professionals will hold their CYP Challenge, beginning and ending at Mill Race.
- k. Two Free Fun Days will be held in June at Donner Center. June 21 will be "Mime Fun with Jolie" and June 28 will be the "Luau Laugh-A-Lot" show. Both events will be held from 1:30-3pm.

Programs:

- a. Summer is off and running! The "Come Out & Play" supervised playground program began on Wed., June 5th. Approximately 100 children attended one of 5 sites: Pence St. Park, Morningside Park, 9th St. Park, Parkside School and Harrison Ridge Park. Lunches are again being served at 9th and Pence St. parks this year in partnership with BCSC on a daily basis. All children who attend field trips on Thursdays will be served lunch. Also through BCSC, the "Book Express" van will be visiting Pence St. Park, 9th St. Park and Morningside Park every Wednesday. "Come Out & Play" is a 7 week FREE program for ages 6-12 from 1:30-4:30pm weekdays. Activities include crafts, games, sports, snacks and field trips!
- b. Our recreational day camp program will begin the week of June 10. Camp SuperKids for ages 6-12 will be held June 10-14th. Campers ages 8-12 will head to Ceraland and participate in swimming, miniature golf, golf driving range, games, paddle boats, magic workshops, tennis and volleyball!
- c. Other day camps for June include:
 - ***Project: A*C*T** - Drama camp for ages 8-12, June 17-21. Camp is co-sponsored with the Theater Dept. at North High School and is held at North Auditorium. Campers will perform "Schoolhouse Rock Live!" on Friday evening, June 21.
 - ***P*L*A*Y On:** Camp for ages 5-7 will also be held June 17-21. We had to add another session to this camp since we had such a long wait list! They will join the Project: A*C*T campers in their performance!
 - "Curious Kids" camp will be held June 17-21 (morning session for ages 3-4 and afternoon session for ages 5-7) at Donner Center. Campers will have some circus fun, make their own snack one day, have a "construction zone" day and take a field trip to the Columbus Airport!
 - "At the Beach" camp for ages 3-7 will be held June 24-28! Campers will have some sandy fun with swimming, shell art, making their own leis and having a "Luau Laugh-A-Lot" with a special guest.
- d. "Super Sitters & More" for ages 11-up will be held June 24-27 from 2-4pm at Donner Center. Participants will learn about babysitting skills, basic first aid and receive a variety of materials. As of June 6, only 1 opening remained!
- e. "Knit Camp for Kids" will be held June 24-28 at Donner Center from 10:30am-12:30pm. A full registration of 12 campers will learn a variety of knitting skills and make a variety of projects.

3. Mark Jones reported the following for the Sports and Athletic Facility Team:

Programs/Tournaments:

- a. Youth baseball continues.
- b. Adult soccer started.
- c. Adult summer volleyball started.
- d. Adult Kickball season ended.
- e. Youth girls fastpitch started their season with practices held and games set to begin on June 11th.
- f. Concessions are doing well.
- g. Lincoln Park Batting Cages are doing well.
- h. CSA summer season continues.
- i. Express soccer spring/summer season is starting to wind down.
- j. Tournaments:
 - GameDay USA baseball – 50 plus teams
 - GameDay USA baseball – 45 teams
 - USFA Fastpitch – 70 plus teams
 - Soccer (pre-lims) – 120 plus teams
 - Soccer (STATE) – 120 plus teams
- k. Prep work continues for upcoming tournaments and summer/fall programs.

- l. USSSA Baseball World Series is set for July 10-14. Prep work continues.
- m. USFA Fastpitch State tournament will be held June 14-16.

Athletic Facilities:

- a. Athletic Facilities Team has been working extremely hard to get Hamilton Center back up and ready for the summer season.
- b. Normal routine maintenance on all athletic facilities and BCSC continues.
- c. Prep work continues for upcoming tournaments.
- d. Prep work continues for upcoming Hamilton Center capital projects (Roof/Restrooms).
- e. Prep work continues for upcoming Dick Wigh capital project (restrooms).

Hamilton Center:

- a. Registrations have begun for Group Lessons, the Summer Figure Skating Program, Intro to Hockey programs and Summer Adult League Hockey. The activities all begin the first full week of June.
- b. Our ice time is filling up quickly, with several out of area rentals. We are looking forward to a busy, successful, summer session!
- c. We were closed for the month of May with lots of cleaning and repairs completed. The ice was taken out and replaced with clean fresh ice, with fresh paint as well. New Hockey Boards were installed and they look amazing, Fresh paint has been added around the rink. The staff did a great job getting everything finished and ready in time for opening! The skate guard room and the admissions room have been cleaned, organized, and given a fresh coat of paint.
- d. We are looking forward to the start of the restroom remodel that begins in July.

4. Katia Hatter reported for Marketing and Public Relations:

a. *Facebook/Twitter:*

Our Facebook and Twitter accounts continue to grow! As of today, we have 2,031 followers on Facebook and 422 followers on Twitter for our Parks & Rec pages and 1,819 followers on our Commons Facebook page and 309 followers on The Commons Twitter account. As always, we gain followers from current followers "sharing" the page with their friends, so if you are on Facebook, please become a fan and share these pages with your friends! This continues to be a tremendous "daily" marketing tool for both our Department and The Commons.

LIKE the Columbus Park Foundation page! We are up to 258 likes as of today! Check it out at <http://www.facebook.com/ColumbusParkFoundation>. You can help us grow by sharing the page with others!

b. *Columbus Park Foundation:*

Wow! We had a great turnout at the Tour de Trails Bicycle Challenge on May 18! Thanks to all of you who helped to spread the word or participated. Our Bicycle Challenge hosted 262 riders this year. Combined with our participation with the Tour de Trails 8K Run/5K Run/5K Walk, we enjoyed a combined participation of over 520 people! We are always looking for ways to improve both events, so please send any feedback or ideas to me at khatter@columbus.in.gov.

c. *Summer Programming:*

Summer programming is off and running this week. Our phones have been busy and the internet is buzzing with registrations! We are looking forward to another great summer. **So far, we have 1,371 kids and adults registered for our summer programs.** We'll continue to report on this number in subsequent reports – we expect it to grow!

As always, if you have comments or concerns with how we're doing in the marketing/public relations area, please feel free to contact me anytime via email (khatter@columbus.in.gov) or via phone (343-8864 or 376-2696). I'd love to hear from you!

5. Casey Ritz reported for Park Operations:
 - a. The month of May was a very busy and exciting time at Park Ops. Nick Rush retired from the department this month. Thank you Nick for all you have done for us as individuals and as a department.
 - b. The Grounds Crew has been very busy with mowing and planting flowers. They have also finished planting our spring trees and shrubs. The crew has started weed control and pruning. I also would like to thank them for their help with the Race 2 Play program.
 - c. The Cleaning Crew has been helping with a lot of tournaments this past month. With the warmer weather they have also been cleaning the shelters and restrooms more frequently. They have noticed quite a bit more trash in the parks.
 - d. The Maintenance Crew has been busy with events and projects. Some of the projects included repairs at the skate park, replacing the boards on benches at Mill Race and repair of a water leak at Clifty Park. The crew provided support for more than our regular park events. They also helped with part of the tear down in Hamilton Center as well as providing significant support for the Race 2 Play program.
 - e. The Commons staff was very busy with events at the facility this month. Events of note included the Prom, National Day of Prayer and Bike to Work with the Mayor. They also had several rentals and field trips during the month. We found that there were more school field trips to the Commons planned by local schools this year.
 - f. The Donner Crew had several events and rentals as well. They helped with getting the pool up and running for the summer. That was no small task with the basement flooding this past month. They worked hard to get everything cleaned and dried. We did not have to close Donner Center down during the drying out period. A big THANK YOU to Gary and James.
 - g. FFY staff worked in the Gymnastics Center during its spring shut down performing general maintenance and cleaning of the space. They also supported rentals and events at the facility. We were excited that Gary Smith was able to return to work at FFY this month. After being out for a while with health issues, I want to say, welcome back Gary!
 - h. For me, it has been very hectic. May is always a busy month at Park Ops. Besides being spring, the school year is coming to an end, there are many events and programming of the parks and maintenance work is always occurring. I would like to say thank you to the staff and good luck Nick Rush.
6. Jim Lemke reported for Aquatics:
 - a. Donner Aquatic Center is open and after a slow Memorial weekend due to weather, we are back up to normal attendance with 1,200 patrons visiting as of 06/04/13.
 - b. DAC also has 250 swimmers signed up for the first session of swim lessons.
7. April Williams reported for Resource Development:
 - a. Current projects:
 - *Park & Park Facilities* –
Hamilton Center Improvements: A plan to pursue a capital campaign for Hamilton Center is underway. From 2011 to-date there has been a total of \$2,237,773 in private/public funding invested in improvements to Hamilton Center. The Capital Campaign goal is for an additional \$800,000 in private funding that will focus on improvements to:
 - New Glass and Dasher Boards (completed in May)
 - The Community Room
 - Lobby/Reception
 - Patio
 - Locker room expansion and improvements
 - Improvements to a multi-purpose room
 - Additional restroom/showers accessible to multi-purpose room

Value of improvements:

- Bring Diversity to the Use of Hamilton Center
- Meet the Current and Future Demand of Users
- Increase Revenue Opportunities
- Expand Tourism Opportunities
- Decrease Operational Costs
- Preserve the Uniqueness and Original Intent of Hamilton Center as a Community Center

- *Park Improvements:*

- We are wrapping up from the success of Race2play with thank you visits and delivery of framed certificates. \$407,000.00 in private funding, \$104,000.00 in public funding and \$28,000 in federal funding brought much needed improvements to 9th St., Morningside, Pence St. and Mead Village parks, reducing the maintenance burden on Parks and Recreation. This event was more than about playgrounds. It brought a community together through philanthropy, volunteerism, and civic support to engage neighborhoods in enhancing their “gathering space”.

Note: If interested in science behind creating enhancing parks and benefits to communities:

<http://www.planning.org/cityparks/briefingpapers/saferneighborhoods.htm>

Excerpt from “How Cities Use Parks to Create Safer Neighborhoods”:

..the importance of greenery in community and personal wellness: Time spent in natural surroundings relieves mental fatigue, which in turn relieves inattentiveness, irritability, and impulsivity, recognized by psychologists as precursors to violence. Green spaces also support frequent, casual contact among neighbors. This leads to the formation of neighborhood social ties, the building blocks of strong, secure neighborhoods where people tend to support, care about, and protect one another.

- A maintenance fund was also established as part of the Race2play campaign. All parks now have ADA accessible components to offer inclusiveness to users while improving Parks and Recreation’s responsibility in meeting ADA standards. A follow-up meeting to discuss future engagement of sponsors in these parks will be planned in the near future.
- The Come Out & Play summer playground program (In existence for 50 years) has now been expanded to the Morningside Park location, as a result of exposure from the Race2play initiative, and is experiencing increased participation each day. We are grateful for Columbus Regional Health Foundation’s investment in expanding this program to create a free resource to residents/children within proximity to Morningside Park, during the summer months. A meeting was organized between me, Healthy Communities’ representatives Beth Morris and Molly Marshall (dietician), and our Program Manager, Kathy McPeck to discuss new ideas for their involvement in Come Out & Play. Kathy agreed to send their dietician our list of snacks for their “stamp of approval”. We are pursuing contact with local farmers for a visit to the program to discuss “how to grow vegetables” and we are revisiting the “Catch” exercise program endorsed by Subway’s Jared Fogle. Visits to promote the program to apartment complexes and the “Public Housing” facilities, within proximity to the park, were very well received. Managers will be promoting the program to their residents.

- *People Trails:*

- A site visit from DNR to view the proposed expansion from the Clifty Park existing trail, north to McClure and connecting to Marr Road was conducted on May 29th . A grant was submitted and we are awaiting results for a potential \$150,000.00, 80/20 federal match toward this expansion piece.

- Working with a committee to plan the Sneakers At Starlight event.
- Created presentation for progress update on People Trail projects for noon Rotary Club. We will use this to send an update to investors of the People Trail Campaign.
- *Park Foundation:*
 - Preparing for mailing to promote the "Generations Club" to current constituency and select demographics.

Thank you for your service!

April Williams

c: Mayor Kristen Brown
Councilman Dascal Bunch
Jeff Logston
Parks & Recreation FT Employees